

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01173 301527Z

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2878

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR

ADMIN CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMIDEASTFOR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 1173

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJ: LAND REFORM SEMINAR OPENS IN ADDIS ABABA

1. ETHIOPIAN HERALD OF JANUARY 30 CARRIED THREE COLUMN HEADLINE ON OPENING OF SEMINAR ON LAND REFORM AND ADMINISTRATION. "TEASER" TERMS IT THE "SECOND NATION-WIDE CAMPAIGN" AND ARTICLE IS ACCOMPANIED BY TWO PICTURES, ONE OF FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN, MAJOR MENGISTU ADDRESSING PARTICIPANTS AND THE OTHER OF HIS AUDIENCE.

2. THE OPENING CEREMONY WAS CHAIRED BY HAILE MARIAM ABIY (BROTHER OF BELAY ABIY) WHO IS COORDINATOR OF THE SEMINAR AND WHO TOLD PARTICIPANTS THAT THE SEMINAR WAS A LANDMARK IN THE BUILDING OF A NEW SOCIETY IN ETHIOPIA. THE CEREMONY WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY PMAC AND CABINET MEMBERS.

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PAGE 02 ADDIS 01173 301527Z

3. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, TWO WEEK SEMINAR OPENED AT NATIONAL

UNIVERSITY (FORMERLY HAILE SELASSIE I UNIVERSITY) WITH THE KEY-
NOTE ADDRESS BY MAJOR MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM WHO EXPLAINED THAT
THE PURPOSE OF THE SEMINAR WAS TO LAUNCH "SECOND MAJOR CAMPAIGN"
BY PROGRESSIVE SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY AGAINST THE DEEPLY
ENTRENCHED FEUDAL SYSTEM AND ALL EVILS OF THE OLD REGIME.

4. NINE HUNDRED CIVILIAN AND 400 MILITARY PARTICIPANTS IN THE
SEMINAR WILL BE BRIEFED BY 28 EXPERT LECTURERS AND 15 OTHER
MILITARY AND CIVILIAN SPEAKERS ON VARIOUS TOPICS OF SOCIALIST
PROGRAMS, PRIMARILY "ADMINISTRATION OF LAND AND LAND REFORM."

5. MAJOR MENGISTU TERMED PARTICIPANTS "DISCIPLES OF CHANGE"
AND SAID THEY WOULD BE CARRYING HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES IN RE-
CONSTRUCTION OF A GREAT ETHIOPIA. HE TOLD PARTICIPANTS THAT THE
POPULAR MOVEMENT IS SCORING MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF
THE DOWN-TRODDEN MASSES AND HAS ALREADY DONE AWAY WITH THE
INFAMOUS OLD REGIME AND RETURNED SOME PROPERTIES TO PEOPLE, ITS
ORIGINAL AND RIGHTFUL OWNERS. ACCORDING TO NEWSPAPER, MENGISTU
TOLD LISTENERS THAT RURAL MASSES OF ETHIOPIA ARE WELCOMING THE
60,000 PARTICIPANTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COOPERATION
CAMPAIGN, BUT THAT THOSE PRESENT WOULD TAKE UP THE SECOND MAJOR
CAMPAIGN ("ZAMETCHA") INTENDED TO WIPE OUT THE DEVILISH CONCEPTS
AND PRACTICES OF THE OLD ORDER AND TO REPLACE THEM WITH BELIEFS
AND DOINGS OF A NEW SOCIALIST SYSTEM."

6. MINISTER OF INTERIOR COLONEL BELACHEW JAMANEH ADDRESSED
PARTICIPANTS TELLING THEM THAT THEY WERE CAREFULLY SELECTED FOR
THEIR PROGRESSIVE THINKING AND ABILITY TO HELP ETHIOPIA GET
THROUGH THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD WITHOUT PROBLEMS. HE ALSO TOLD
PARTICIPANTS THAT THEY MUST MOLD A NEW SOCIETY OF JUSTICE AND
EQUALITY AND MUST SERVE RATHER THAN GOVERN ETHIOPIA.

7. MINISTER OF LAND REFORM, ATO ZEGEYE ASFAW, SAID THE SEMINAR
WILL STUDY HOW THE FEUDAL CONSPIRACY WAS WORKING AGAINST THE
PEASANTRY AND WOULD CONSIDER WAYS OF CHANGING THE OLD LAND-
HOLDING SYSTEM "WITHOUT AFTER-EFFECTS." ATO ZEGEYE REPORTEDLY
REVEALED THAT A DRAFT LAND PROCLAMATION HAS RPT HAS BEEN PREPARED
AND SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ASSIGNED TO IMPLEMENT THE
PROCLAMATION. ACCORDING TO ARTICLE, "SOCIALIST ETHIOPIA WILL
GIVE LAND TO THE TILLER AND COLLECTIVE FARMS AND COMMUNES WILL
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PAGE 03 ADDIS 01173 301527Z

TAKE CARE OF THE LAND AND ITS UTILIZATION FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF
THE PEOPLE." HE CONTINUED, STATING THAT THE LAND REFORM PROGRAM
CANNOT BE TAKEN AS A NEW LAW BECAUSE THE PEOPLE HAVE WANTED AND
DEMANDED IT. PARTICIPANTS MUST HAVE NO FEAR OF IMPLEMENTING THE
LAND LAW, BUT MUST BE ALERT BECAUSE REMNANTS OF THE OLD SYSTEM
MAY ATTEMPT TO RESIST THE WINDS OF CHANGE.

8. LEAD EDITORIAL IN SAME EDITION WAS ESSENTIALLY A GISTING OF

THE ARTICLE REPORTED ABOVE WITH USUAL ENCOMIUMS FOR "THE GOSPEL OF SOCIALISM" AND "THE SECRED MISSION" OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SEMINAR.

9. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT "DIRG," NOT UNIVERSITY, RUNNING THE SEMINAR DIRECTLY AND THAT ACCESS TO IT IS BEING STRICTLY CONTROLLED. MANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS BROUGHT IN FOR SEMINAR ARE BOARDING ON CAMPUS. BESIDES MILITARY, THEY INCLUDE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICERS, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS AND MINLAND REFORM ETC. CADRES. SEMINAR SCHEDULED LAST FORTNIGHT.

COMMENT: AS WORD OF SEMINAR AND OTHER LAND REFORM PREPARATIONS SPREADS, WE WOULD EXPECT INITIAL REACTIONS TO SURFACE FAIRLY SOON.

WYMAN

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